

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LISBON 04174 241508Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O R 241430Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3513

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T LISBON 4174

EXDIS

DEPT ALSO PASS INFO DIA WASHDC AND USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: PRO-COMMUNIST POWER PLAY

REF: (A) LISBON 4157, (B) LISBON 4149, (C) STATE 173076

(NOTAL), (D) LISBON 4129

1. PER REF (B), DATT MET AGAIN WITH PRESIDENT'S CHIEF MILITARY AIDE CALDAS. FOR FIRST TIME CALDAS INDICATED SOME NERVOUSNESS AT BEING SEEN TOO FREQUENTLY IN PRESENCE OF AMERICANS.

2. DATT ASKED CALDAS POINT BLANK IF COSTA GOMES INTENDED ALLOW VASCO GONCALVES TO STAY AND FORM A GOVERNMENT. CALDAS SAID THAT NOW SEEMED TO BE THE CASE, ALTHOUGH COSTA GOMES HAD SAID PRIVATELY THAT IT WAS TOO BAD VASCO DID NOT ASK TO BE RELIEVED. THAT WOULD BE MUCH SIMPLER FOR HIM (COSTA GOMES).

3. DATT ALSO ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE FORGED PLANS ON AN AMERICAN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LISBON 04174 241508Z

INVASION. CALDAS KNEW OF NONE, BUT DID REFER TO A WAR GAME

IN WHICH THE BLUES HAD TO DEAL WITH THE REDS, THE LATTER
BEING A COUNTRY SUBVERTED BY COMMUNISM. ACCORDING TO CALDAS,
COSTA GOMES WAS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT RUMORS OF U.S. INVASION.
(FYI THIS MODIFIES INFORMATION GIVEN ME BY SOARES AND CON-
FIRMS WHAT VITOR ALVES TOLD ME YESTERDAY.)

4. DATT ASKED CALDAS WHY COSTA GOMES SEEMED TO BE ABANDONING
MODERATES AND SUPPORTING VASCO GONCALVES. AFTER BRIDLING A
BIT AT THE QUESTION, CALDAS SAID NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHAT
IS IN COSTA GOMES'S MIND. BUT HE, CALDAS, THINKS THAT ALL
THE PRESSURE ON COSTA GOMES IS LEADING HIM TO SUPPORT VASCO
GONCALVES, BUT ONLY FOR THE SHORT TERM. IN TWO OR THREE
MONTHS VASCO WILL AGAIN BE IN TROUBLE AND COSTA GOMES MIGHT
TAKE DIFFERENT POSITION. (FYI THERE IS A THEORY AROUND
TOWN THAT VASCO SHOULD BE GIVEN ANOTHER FEW MONTHS TO HANG
HIMSELF BUT THIS THEORY IS NOT SHARED BY MELO ANTUNES, VITOR
ALVES, ET AL.) THE MODERATES ARE TRYING TO TELL COSTA
GOMES THAT EACH TIME HE LETS AN OPPORTUNITY SLIDE BY THE NEXT
TIME IT WILL BE JUST THAT MUCH HARDER TO REMOVE VASCO GONCALVES.

5. CALDAS THEN ASKED WHAT THE U.S. INTENDED TO DO ABOUT AZORES.
DATT ASKED WHY THE QUESTION. CALDAS SAID THERE
IS A THEORY HELD BY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL AND COSTA GOMES THAT
PORTUGAL WITHOUT THE AZORES IF OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE TO US
INTERESTS. THEY REASON THAT IF AZORES BECOME INDEPENDENT, PRINCIPAL
U.S. INTEREST IN PORTUGAL WILL HAVE BEEN REMOVED AND USG WILL
ALLOW PORTUGAL TO GO COMMUNIST AS A "VACCINE FOR EUROPE." DATT
EXPLAINED THAT OUR POLICY WITH REGARD TO AZORES WAS ONE OF
STRICT NEUTRALITY.

6. COMMENT: AS EMBASSY HAS REPORTED, A GREAT DEAL OF ATTEN-
TION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE AZORES IN THE PAST FEW DAYS IN THE
LISBON PRESS. THE PCP IS EXERTING PRESURE BY DEMANDING
REPRESENTATIO ON THE JUNTA. TODAY'S DIARIO DE NOTICIAS
CLAIMS THAT REACTIONARIES HAVE THE RUN OF THE ISLANDS. COMING
AS IT DOES AT A CRITICAL MOMENT IN THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL
CRISIS, THIS SUGGESTS THAT USG POSITION ON AOZRES IS NOW IN-
VOLVED IN OVERALL POLITICAL DEBATE. WE HAVE STRESSED NEUTRALITY
BUT PCP IS UNQUESTIONABLY DISSEMINATING PROPAGANDA
TO THE CONTRARY.

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PAGE 03 LISBON 04174 241508Z

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NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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